

## Preface

Professor Harubumi Kato and Harwood Academic Publishers should be complimented for their work in preparing the first issue of a new medical journal. This is a task of major proportion at any time. But at this particular time in the world economy to introduce a medical journal on an international scale devoted to the broad field of endoscopy takes a special kind of courage, vision, and confidence in the future of international medicine.

The medical economic pressures are such that there is less interest now than in recent years in the areas of technology development, technology transfer to the clinic setting, and assessment of new technology for clinical effectiveness. In the rush to reduce the overall costs of medical care in our countries there is a tendency for administrative policy makers to agree to pay for only those modalities of proven effectiveness. They often accept the self serving assumption that if a modality is not proven to be effective then it must be ineffective. Medical policy crafted with this premise in mind will ultimately stifle medical innovation. Worse, it has the potential to encourage physicians to overlook new modalities that may prove to be more effective and efficient (cost effective) than currently approved (paid for) modalities.

Professor Kato's vision of the future of medicine goes beyond this. He sees the need and the opportunity for physicians to participate in the continued introduction of new concepts, techniques, and technology into the management of their patients. He sees doing all this in an atmosphere of medical inquiry to establish the role in medical practice, if any, of these new modalities. The finding that a new, and often expensive, modality has nothing new to contribute is often just as important as finding a new and effective one.

The journal of DIAGNOSTIC AND THERAPEUTIC ENDOSCOPY is introduced in this spirit. It is dedicated to the entire field under one journal. There is geographical representation among the editorial boards from Asia, Europe, and America to facilitate publication of papers from throughout the world. The journal will fulfill a mission by providing a much needed mechanism for the international exchange of ideas about the ever expanding reach of diagnostic and therapeutic endoscopes and endoscopic technique. It will fulfill an equally important mission as it helps establish the appropriate role of these modalities in the future of medical practice.

Congratulations for a fine job to Professor Kato and Harwood Academic Publishers. It is up to the rest of us to help make the journal a success story in the next several years.

Denise A. Cortese, MD  
Professor of Medicine and Thoracic Diseases  
Mayo Medical School  
Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, Florida, USA